



Association internationale des bibliothèques, archives et centres de documentation musicaux (AIBM)

International Association of Music Libraries, Archives and Documentation Centres (IAML)

Internationale Vereinigung der Musikbibliotheken, Musikarchive und Musikdokumentationszentren (IVMB)

## Italy, report 2011

In 2011, Italy celebrated the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the unification of the country in one state with several initiatives. The Italian branch of IAML choose to underline the importance of national bibliographic services for music organizing its annual meeting on 13 May in Rome at the Biblioteca Nazionale, in cooperation with the Istituto Centrale per il Catalogo Unico delle biblioteche italiane e per le informazioni bibliografiche (ICCU), the national cataloguing agency. The meeting included the annual general assembly and a session devoted to libraries in the Conservatory of music, held at the Library of the Conservatorio S. Cecilia, on the following morning.

Aiming to involve a larger number of IAML-Italia members in an active role, the meeting focused on different areas of cooperation with ICCU: the renovation of the SBN Opac, the updating of the directory *Anagrafe delle biblioteche italiane* and the daily cooperation with the SBN network. The renovated SBN Opac was presented by Gisella De Caro; significant improvements of this version, based on open source software, include changes about indexing and research methods; the chance to filter data by library; a more user friendly list of results, thanks to a rich faceted presentation which includes fields related to music. The Opac has been updated with music data, which have been added in the SBN database since the year 2004, which were not yet available. The successful participation of IAML-Italia members in testing the Opac beta version is due to the discussion developed on the mailing list IAMLIta-L and to two papers presented by Paola Polito and Daniela Macchione at the annual meeting. Several of our hints have been accepted by ICCU, before the final version has been released in September 2011. The SBN Opac user interface is now very similar to that of *RISM-Online*, thus it is very easy to compare the content of the two databases, which are complementary sources to access the music heritage preserved in Italian libraries, as far as music manuscript concerns.

On 14 May, the session about music Library in Conservatories focused on issues related to the improvement of library staff, a goal never reached in decades, trying to take into account the social and economic context, and by sharing local experiences. The national contract signed by the Ministero dell'Università e Ricerca and the unions in August 2010, could be a chance to improve staff in conservatory libraries, as it introduces the 'Assistant librarian', a professional profile not existing before. But staff needs are crucial also among music teachers needed to implement the study reform of public school of music in the frame of the Bologna process, taking into account that the Italian law forces the reform to be free of cost for the state. The contemporaneous implementation of the new working contract, the reforms of music study, and of the administration of Conservatories towards an autonomous regulation is thus exasperating the chronic lack of staff in historic libraries of major conservatories. The staff issue may be faced among new and small conservatories, where the proportion between library staff, student, teachers, size of collections, aims, and workloads is nearer to the actual need. As teaching, research and artistic production are now the core business of the Conservatories of music, it has to still be understood how libraries can give 'a service' (not even a good service) if staff needs inside the school are in such a deep conflict: a survey to collect information about the existing library staff is going to be done, as a first step towards any possible solution of this issue.



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A presentation of RIPM's news was held by Robert H. Cohen and Marcello Conati before the very start of the annual assembly, where some already active working groups were formally approved. A first working group aims to give stable shape to the cooperation with the SBN network and to the national directory *Anagrafe delle biblioteche italiane*, working closely to ICCU in updating data about music libraries and their services. The working group on advocacy for work in music library and the profession (Osservatorio lavoro) improved contact with *Abbracciamo la cultura (We embrace culture)*, a coalition of the professional associations of the cultural environment assisted by the major Italian union CGIL. The coalition's aim is to improve social visibility of cultural institutions and professions. A first outcome of our commitment was reached in February on occasion of the popular survey "which monument would you like to save?" promoted by the Neapolitan newspaper *Gazzetta del Mezzogiorno*. Here the library of the Conservatorio S. Pietro a Majella in Naples reached a visible fourth place, thanks also to the great support given by the IAML community who answered generously to this emblematic and symbolic test. Another outcome is the more strict cooperation with the Italian Library Association. The working group on Music archives improved the relationship with the initiative 'Archivi musicali del Novecento' the directory of archival collections of music personalities of the 20<sup>th</sup> century promoted by the Direzione generale Archivi del Ministero dei Beni culturali e ambientali, which has been presented at the IAML conference in Dublin, leading to more efficient contacts with the AMA working group of IAML.

In 2011, the Italian branch gives chance to meet and to work together to 128 members: 51 individuals and 79 institutions. Tiziana Grande, Mauro Amato and Cesare Corsi are presently working as editorial staff at the publication of the proceedings of the IAML conference in Naples 2008, which will include papers on Italian topics. Maria Grazia Melucci volunteered in helping our secretary, the archivist Angela D'Elia, who, due to the lack of job opportunities, had to choose a steady job different from her profession; we do thank both for their service. Elections of the new board will be held at the annual assembly 2012.

A training course on music cataloguing organized in Sicily by Consuelo Giglio (Palermo, 14-15 December 2010) in cooperation with the Sicilian board of the Associazione Italiana Biblioteche (AIB), the SBN network and the Music Department of the University in Palermo, has been an important step to fill the existing gap between Sicilian music libraries and the SBN network; to develop knowledge about music documents among general librarians; to strengthen relationships among professional: it was followed by 17 participants and 20 listeners. Thanks to the determined support given by the Soprintendenza, the regional administration of libraries and archives, the Conservatory of music in Palermo is among those libraries that have been recently connected to SBN. Details about the lessons and the digital projects presented at the course are published on the IAML-Italia website, at the link 'Corsi' on the homepage.

An opportunity to cooperate at international level was offered by the Spanish branch, who asked for a paper on the training of music librarians in Italy, which was held by Federica Riva (Malaga, FESABID conference, 27 May 2011).

Last but not least: *La Guida alla catalogazione in SBN: Musica a stampa, Libretti a stampa, Registrazioni sonore musicali, Video musicali*, alias the new Italian guide to music cataloguing



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in SBN, edited by ICCU has been published as final draft on the ICCU website on 20 July 2011. A paper version will follow. The guide takes into account the general Italian code for cataloguing, REICAT (2009) and the ISBD consolidated; is now up to the Italian community of music librarians to apply them, and to discuss its implementation. Therefore the discussion of RDA and music in Italy is not yet started: one IAML-Italia member, Tiziana Morsanuto, followed on 18<sup>th</sup> April 2011 the seminar held on RDA by Barbara Tillett, who was invited by Prof. Mauro Guerrini at the University in Florence.

*Federica Riva*

*President, IAML (Italia)*